Hat(e) For Sale: A Meditation on MAGA

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2026

Once upon a time, circa 2015, I had sort of a lot going on – there was a move to a new state, then I (finally) got knocked up, which was followed by another move, so I was already going to the doctor more than usual & then I had to *change* doctors mid-pregnancy & there were boxes everywhere & it was more chaotic than usual. These were All Good Things but they were definitely Time & Attention Consuming Things.

I mention all this by way of an excuse. I wasn't really paying attention to what was going on in terms of US elections, because I was pretty focused on other tumultuous life-changing events. *In any case*, the infant emerged into a pile of moving boxes & chaos, & in the midst of the additional chaos of around-the-clock nursing & sleeplessness, I started reading some Octavia Butler on an e-reader (low light & good for sanity).

In “Parable of the Talents” (1998), which is a *fictional* novel, which devoted readers know I have trouble* with, Octavia Butler has someone running for president of what remains of the USA in a futuristic dystopia on the campaign “Make America Great Again.”

* see such stunning revelations as “Protestants are not actually the same thing as hobbits” and “PEI is a real place” by this author: https://dessertating.wordpress.com/2011/05/09/once-upon-a-time/

In passing, I thought, “huh, that’s so funny,” in the way where new parents don’t actually have thoughts, just a brain made of swiss cheese that responds to the commands of an infant, & I kept reading or (more likely) fell asleep with my face smooshed into the e-reader, & I totally forgot about the throw-away line in between boxes & diapers & bears, oh my. (I must have heard something about MAGA by this point, but who knows?!)

A few days (weeks? months? hours?) later, I was with the slightly-less-brand-new-born child at the park, and I saw a dude walking his dog wearing a red hat that said “Make America Great Again.”
I waved, in that confused, enthusiastic, sleep-deprived, extroverted-but-under-stimulated way of being a New Mom & midwestern & neighborly in a decidedly not neighborly state (although it is a very “Blue” state).

And I said, dear reader I literally actually went over to this dude and said, “Oh, I love your hat! Are you an Octavia Butler fan, too?!”

And he was like, “What?”

And I was like, “What?”

And then we never spoke again, for reasons that became immediately obvious to anyone who wasn’t the incredibly sleep-deprived main character of this zine.

In conclusion, I think we should reclaim MAGA hats for Octavia Butler fans, because nothing would make USAmerica greater than embracing a Black woman's Afrofuturism as a template for the pathway to an equitable society in the stars. Or I could sleep more--that's not a bad idea.

Hats off to Octavia Butler!

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